

GORDON CONFERENCE ON THE PHAGOCYTE

The Gordon Conference on the Phagocyte was held from June 25-30, 1989 in Holderness, Plymouth, New Hampshire. This conference brought together 150 active investigators in a workshop surrounding so that the rapid breaking scientific areas related to this field could be discussed in an informal manner. By any criteria, the conference was a great success. A number of important investigators from outside the field attended the conference. Drs. Anthony Cerami and Charles Dinarello discussed the role of cytokines in leukocyte activation from a perspective not generally seen by investigators in the field of phagocytic cell biology. Dr. John DiPersio discussed the exciting clinical potentials of GM-CSF as well as the effect of this cytokine on leukocyte function. Dr. Motasim Billah and Shamshad Cockcroft summarized novel biochemical pathways through which leukocytes might be activated. These "outside investigators" had a major impact on the flavor of the conference and broadened the scope of many of the scientists in attendance. Many active new collaborations were developed.

Since the previous phagocyte Gordon Conference, there have been dramatic breakthroughs in the understanding of the mechanisms of the respiratory burst and the clinical usefulness of interferon gamma in treating chronic granulomatous disease. These topics were discussed in great detail and led to areas of consensus concerning formerly controversial areas. It was also clearly defined where future research needed to be done. The stimulus-response coupling pathways of leukocytes were subject to important advances which were summarized at this meeting. The role of various adhesion proteins in the inflammatory response was summarized by leading investigations in this area. The role of monophages as carriers of HIV was also addressed. Two poster sessions consisting of over 30 presentations enabled non-invited speakers to present their most recent work. Many of the poster presenters also showed slides during the plenary sessions.

Evidence for the increasing importance of phagocytic cell research is based on the fact that the conference was oversubscribed by a ratio of approximately 2:1. In all, the Phagocytic Cell Gordon Conference appeared to be extremely popular, and most importantly, should have a favorable impact on research in this field for years to come.